

ADMINISTRATIVE - INTERNAL USE ONLY

DD/S 73-0766

1 MAR 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. W.E. Colby

SUBJECT : Senior Seminar Procedures

1. In looking over the material for Senior Seminar Three which is now underway, you inquired in writing about several procedures. One question concerned the "Scope Notes" which describe the subject matter to be covered by guest speakers in their presentations to the Seminar and you wondered if the speakers receive the Scope Notes. In arranging for a guest speaker, the Senior Seminar Staff drafts a tentative Scope Note which is forwarded to or discussed with the speaker. In many cases a Scope Note is rewritten as a result of these exchanges. This system has served the Senior Seminar quite well as the Scope Notes are incorporated into the schedule, and Seminar members know at least in general terms what a speaker is expected to cover. Members are thus able to "bone-up" on the subject matter and direct their questions to better advantage.

2. You also inquired whether good substantive ideas which are shared with the Seminar by non-Agency speakers, such as officers from State or the NSC Staff, are passed on to Agency management. The Senior Seminar Staff, whenever feasible, keeps a record of the material covered by guest speakers. In those instances when this material might be of interest to management, a Memorandum for the Record is produced and forwarded. An example from Senior Seminar One was the remarks of Mr. Macomber [redacted] which was provided to Mr. Karamessines. [redacted] Another recent example concerned the remarks by Mr. Andrew Marshall to the Seminar; a copy of this MFR is attached.

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/s/ Robert M. [redacted]

John W. Coffey
Deputy Director for Support

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Distribution:

Orig & 1 - Adse(w/att)
 1 - ER (w/att)
 2 - DDS (1w/att, 1w/o att) *circled*

20 February 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

SUBJECT: Remarks of Mr. Andrew Marshall

1. Mr. Marshall met with the Senior Seminar from 0830 through 1000, Thursday, 15 February to discuss the topic "Intelligence Products: Problems and Improvements." When we considered inviting Mr. Marshall originally, it was with the idea of hearing him talk on his work in the field of net assessments as a subject fitting the week's theme of "New Methodologies of Interest to Intelligence." When Mr. [] met with him, however, Mr. Marshall suggested that he concentrate instead on the products of intelligence to which we agreed in view of recent changes. Accordingly, while Mr. Marshall occasionally referred to new methods, it was in the context of exhorting CIA to experiment with them, rather than the substance of net assessment as a new technique. STAT

2. Mr. Marshall began by saying that in his talk he would encourage us to employ new techniques to a greater extent, but that he would also address the question of the difficulties which arise in trying to utilize them. He then launched into a lengthy discussion of the intelligence product as he has perceived it from the vantage point of his earlier associations with the Agency and the Intelligence Community while at RAND and particularly from the perspective of his present position as chief of the NSC Intelligence Committee's Net Assessment Group. His remarks about the product were critical in varying degrees and are based, according to Mr. Marshall, on comments he has received from "consumers" whom he specifically identified as "members" of the NSC staff under Dr. Kissinger.

3. His criticisms are as follows:

a. The intelligence product and the production organizations are deficient in their "communication." In this connection he mentioned writing style. He said we do not experiment enough with different formats. He singled out several times the lack of adequate summaries to accompany longer reports and criticized our summaries as "not hard hitting enough," i.e., they do not summarize the conclusions of the longer report well or firmly enough. He mentioned that "uncertainties" concerning the

ADMINISTRATIVE - INTERNAL USE ONLY

-2-

judgments and estimates in the intelligence product are not adequately specified for the benefit of the reader. He cited the "anonymity" of authorship as a major problem on the grounds that a consumer comes to trust an intelligence statement on the basis of knowing the individual whose judgment is expressed.

b. The second set of criticisms concerned the "focus of the product." This Mr. Marshall characterized as writing about the right subjects in the right way. He stated that he recognizes that intelligence producers do not get much feedback --and that which is given is skewed in favor of praise. He assigns blame to the consumer who is busy and does not know what he wants, but particularly to the producer. He criticized the Agency for failing to do "market research." He agreed that the questionnaires techniques is probably no good, but referred several times to the "Madison Avenue" approach. He said that we should be more forceful and make a greater effort to find out how we can help the consumer--again pointing to personnel contact between the area men in the NSC staff and area experts in the Agency. With regard to focus, he also said he believes we should try more experimental products, the same products in a variety of formats and particularly try to experiment with new methodologies.

c. Mr. Marshall then cited some "Organization and Management Changes" which he opined are necessary in order to get new approaches off the ground. He said that it has proven most difficult to get experimental efforts going because on-line production offices are reluctant to put good people on problems being dealt with in an experimental mode. He suggested that a separate unit(s) be set up for the sole purpose of experimentation in the field of intelligence production. He cited training of analysts to work in the field of new methodologies as important.

d. He then turned to the "quality of analysis." He stated that much of our analysis is wanting in interpretation, not just occasional holes, but with respect to "whole programs." He charged that we fail to answer vital questions of "Why?" or "What Next?" and that we fail to put forth adequate hypotheses. He noted that there is not much in the way of reasoning behind our intelligence statements and that they cannot be compared at a future date. In sum, he claimed, we have provided few "basic answers" over the 10 to 20 years of our existence. In a provocative assertion, he claimed that in order to provide answers to fundamental questions, he could do almost as well by dragging in a bunch of "people off the street." We just are not

-3-

good enough. As a corrective, he urged we adopt the use of footnotes citing sources and append annexes which lay out the reasoning behind intelligence statements. He repeated that it is difficult to find "real analysis" in our products. He also suggested that we try harder to reach "our real readers" who, he suggested, are the staff persons working for top leaders, e.g., the NSC staff. He again stressed the importance of good summaries for top readers. He suggested that we experiment more with visual, rather than word, presentations of material, e.g., cartoons. To improve the analytical quality of our product, he proposed that we institute an R&D effort in analysis, giving in-depth study to selected topics and that we make an effort to develop means of conducting a critical review on a sampling basis in order to get feedback.

e. Turning to new methods, he held up Bayesian analysis as providing a systematic way of handling uncertainties, citing Dr. Kissinger's comment to him that policy-making is "betting on the future." Mr. Marshall suggested, that we might try expressing our intelligence judgments to Dr. Kissinger in the form of betting odds. He also mentioned the Bureaucratic Politics model of analysis followed by Graham Allison as a useful means of interpreting the behavior of other governments. He cited Kuhn's Scientific Revolution as useful reading, and held up the behavioral sciences as potentially useful in gaining insight into the actions of key foreign leaders, noting the [redacted] as helpful.

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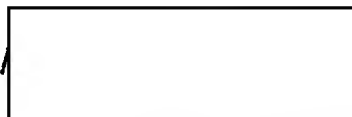
3. As to "cautionary tales," Mr. Marshall gave his view that game theory has not been very useful. He cited the barriers that exist to innovation, giving as an example a rather lengthy effort on his part going back to 1958 while he was at RAND to get the Agency to take a new tack in analyzing Soviet weapons programs.

4. Mr. Marshall stated, in summary, that he feels that the Agency should take the leadership in certain key areas vis-a-vis universities and think-tanks. He said in some cases these are areas in which CIA is falling behind. He urged that the Agency have closer contact with this outside work. He observed that we should not expect this work to be developed outside to the extent that it then be handed to CIA and immediately applied.

ADMINISTRATIVE - INTERNAL USE ONLY

-4-

5. The question and answer session served mainly to amplify some of Mr. Marshall's statements. One exchange concerned the unwillingness of the consumer to "level" with CIA --saying only good things to us, but voicing dissatisfaction to others such as Marshall. He again implied that the burden of producer-consumer communication falls on the intelligence producer.



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Chief, Senior Seminar

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Senior Seminar Procedures

FROM:

DDS

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

DD / ~~REGISTRY~~

FILE *Training 3*

1 MAR 1973

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1. ER
7E 12 Hqs.

3/1/73

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③ Bill -

OTR IS SENDING COPIES OF THE 20 FEB MFR TO HUIZENGA, PROCTOR & LEHMAN. IF THERE ARE OTHERS WHO SHOULD HAVE COPIES LET ME KNOW.

2.

3. Mr. W.E. Colby
7D 59 Hqs.

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